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HARDY ROSES

and

HOW TO GROW THEM



WAHOO LODGE GARDENS

SIOUX FALLS. SO. DAK.

ROSES FOR OUTDOOR PLANTING

I am assigned this subject of "Roses" by the makers of this program and I am going to change it to read "Roses For Outdoor Planting," as I have no knowledge of the greenhouse treatment.

My first experience with roses dates back to 1886 in California as a boy in my teens. A neighbor taught me grafting, not the kind most commonly spoken of today, as we lived well in the country at the foot of the mountains and knew little of such things. Our grafting was the kind well understood by nursery men and we were quite successful in making a yellow rose grow on a red rose bush. Later our family returned to South Dakota, and I still insisted on trying to have a little rose bed at home, usually a dozen or two of the one-year greenhouse variety which bloomed a few times and winter killed. After I was married and secured a home of my own in 1900, I took rose growing seriously and determined to have roses in the garden permanently or prove that it could not be done.

My experience started modestly at first with a dozen or two with one kind of rose, then another with and without shelter, with protection from the afternoon sun and in the open. I bought from every grower that had "the finest stock obtainable," even importing from Ireland and France. When I sold my Minnesota Avenue home in Sioux Falls in 1919, I had four beds of one hundred each and my experience had convinced me that my success was not complete. I had fully convinced myself, however, that it made but little difference whether the stock was budded on Manetta or Wild Rose or Rugosa or some other very hardy variety, the result would not be attained that way as the hardiness of the root stock was only one of the many problems to solve.

When I moved to Wahoo Lodge, I determined to try an entirely different system and I can now truthfully say that I believe it the only successful way of having roses for out-of-doors in this climate. As it is well known to grow roses on their own roots, it is necessary to start from cutting. This I insist,

must have its proper care to highly develop a strong root system through the first year, while the second year, they are allowed to develop canes to commercial size.

Something more than growing roses on their own root, however, is important, as it has been a tedious experiment to determine what varieties are freest from disease and what varieties will best withstand draught, heat or cold. It has not been so difficult to select Hybrid Perpetuals nor is there a very great objection to them being budded low on good stock but Hybrid Teas is another problem. Is my experience I have discovered that positively in the Hybrid Teas the reds are the most hardy, with the pinks a close second and the yellows are the least hardy. All of our roses are grown under contract for us by a grower not generally known.

After securing properly grown stock, the battle is only half won. I advise that a bed be made in virgin soil, not previously used for a garden. That it be spaded at least two full spade lengths deep. It would be best if the bottom four or six inches of soil be discarded and four or six inches of well rotted cow manure be worked thoroughly into the soil until it is very melow. Do not mound up a rose bed. Keep it two inches below surrounding border, so water will not run off of it. Then plant your rose bushes, making a good generous hole, keeping your rose bushes all the time before planting in a pail of water. Spread the roots out well, pack the soil very firmly about them. When the hole is half full of soil, put in a quart or more of water, then fill and firm the dirt to about two inches about the original planting or if budding, not two inches above the bud. I should have said that all broken or rough ends of the roots should be pruned before planting and the tops cut back so as to have not over four to six buds to the stalk and not over three strong canes. Hybrid Teas should not be planted over 15 to 18 inches apart and Hybrid Perpetuals 18 to 24 inches. Don't wait for a rain to wet your rose bed, give it a good soaking the first night and at least twice a week. Don't let rain

interfere with your care of the rose bed. It's just a little added drink. Keep the soil soft and mellow by frequent hoeing. A weed has no more a place in a rose bed if you wish success than it has in a hill of corn. No trees should shade a rose bed nor be within fifty feet of it for real success, as the fine roots of trees rapidly take the moisture and nourishment from the bed.

For winter protection, I advise that the tops be staked down as low as possible without breaking and two to four inches of soil be drawn up around the roots and as soon as freezing weather starts, a generous cover of straw, preferably flax straw, be spread over the bed to the depth of 6 inches to a foot, not to keep out frost, but to protect from wind and sun. I prefer flax straw as the snow and ice does not pack and rot it as badly as the other. Last winter on the coldest and bleakest hill at Wahoo Lodge a bed of 36 plants were carried through the winter without the loss of a plant and the blooms this summer were constant and a source of amazement to visitors.

The above article by Mr. Tuthill was read at the meeting of the State Horticultural Society in January, 1923.